



Via Electronic Mail

March 25, 2026

The Honorable David A. Bennett
Chair, House Environment and Natural Resources
House Lounge, State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: CLF **Supports** House Bill No. 7917 – Mandatory Act on Climate Compliance in State Budgeting and Planning

Dear Chair Bennett:

The Conservation Law Foundation (“CLF”) appreciates the opportunity to comment on House Bill No. 7917, which requires state departments and agencies to integrate the recommendations contained in the Act on Climate Strategy Report. CLF emphatically supports the passage of H-7917.

CLF is a member-supported non-profit advocacy organization working to protect public health and the environment and build healthy communities in Rhode Island and throughout New England. CLF supports policies that help to achieve the greenhouse gas emissions reduction mandates of the Act on Climate.

On February 11, 2026, Darrèll Brown, CLF Vice President for Rhode Island, and CLF attorneys presented testimony to Senator Zurier’s Special Legislative Commission to Study the Successful Implementation of the Act on Climate.¹ As part of its written testimony to the Commission, CLF noted that the Strategy Report “fails to recommend any specific course of action. It lists and describes potential policies that could reduce state emissions, but it does not say which of these policies the state will or should pursue.”

In the absence of any clear direction by the Administration, H-7917 is an alternative step of bringing state agencies into compliance with the Act on Climate. The bill requires state agencies to incorporate quantified emissions impact analysis and enforceable review standards, so that we can begin the measuring progress at decision-by-decision detail.

CLF encourages the Rhode Island legislature to go beyond setting measurement standards and produce additional, more nuanced, legislation designed to achieve the requirements of the Act on Climate in particular sectors of Rhode Island’s economy. For instance, CLF suggests that the

¹ A copy of CLF’s written testimony to the AOC Study Commission is attached to this written testimony.

legislature establish a legislative study commission to study and publish a report on how the Rhode Island Department of Transportation and the Rhode Island Division of Statewide Planning should evaluate and approve statewide transportation investments to ensure that they align with greenhouse gas reduction and societal benefit goals as recommended by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy and envisioned in pending Massachusetts “Freedom to Move” legislation.²

We therefore ask that you pass House Bill No. 7917.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Stang
Senior Attorney, Rhode Island
Conservation Law Foundation

cc: Members of the House Committee Environment and Natural Resources
Darrèll Brown, Vice President, Rhode Island, Conservation Law Foundation

² Caroline Daigle, Am. Council for an Energy-Efficient Econ., Driving Emissions Reduction through Project Prioritization: Insights for State Departments of Transportation (Mar. 2025), available at https://www.aceee.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/driving_emissions_reduction_through_project_prioritization_-_insights_for_state_departments_of_transportation.pdf; S.2246, 194th Gen. Ct. (Mar. 2025), available at <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/194/S2246/PrimarySponsorSummary>.